

SIMILE ZOLA, NOVELIST AND  
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paper now dared to print a word on behalf of this old servant of . the press whom the " Vigilants " had chosen for their victim. On the morrow of the first trial the "leader" writers had hastened to avail themselves of his plea of guilty to pass unanimous condemnation on him. The delighted " Vigilants " had promptly printed and circu- lated extracts from the " Times," " St. James's Gazette," "Whitehall Beview," "Star," "Globe," "Morning Adver- tiser," " Saturday Review," " Methodist Times," " Liverpool Mercury," and " Western Morning News "; and those sam- ples of English press opinion might have been multiplied indefinitely. They showed all parties in agreement: the Tories and the Radicals, the Puritans and the Publicans. Coote, the secretary to the " Vigilants," had become *censor morum*, and all bowed to his authority. Yet some members of this so-called " National Vigilance Association " had been mixed up in various nefarious matters. There had been, as Mr. George Moore subsequently wrote, "the case of an unfortunate foreign prince, who was dragged into court on a charge of abduction or seduction, or both; when the matter came to be sifted it was found that he was absolutely and wholly innocent. So conclusive and so

unimpeachable was the evidence, that Mr. Besley, who prosecuted for the Association, had to admit that he had nothing to say, and the judge replied, 'I should think not, indeed.'"<sup>1</sup>

Again there was a notorious Leamington case in which the " Vigilants " prosecuted, and in which, as Mr. Moore again pointed out, it was proved that two women clandes-

<sup>1</sup> "The New Censorship of Literature," by George Moore, "Few York Herald," London edition, July 28, 1889.